

and at first very liquid, then by degrees less so, and in such quantities, that in less than twelve hours, with the help of the above-mentioned stones, a mountain was raised of 1000 paces in height. Not only Puzzuoli and the neighbouring country was full of this mud, but the city of Naples also ; so that many of its palaces were defaced by it. Now this eruption lasted two nights and two days without intermission, though, it is true, not always with the same force ; the third day the eruption ceased, and I went up with many people to the top of the new hill, and saw down into its mouth, which was a round cavity about a quarter of a mile in circumference, in the middle of which, the stones which had fallen were boiling up, just as a caldron of water boils on the fire. The fourth day it began to throw up again, and the seventh much more, but still with less violence than the first night. At this time many persons who were on the hill were knocked down by the stones and killed, or smothered with the smoke. In the day the smoke still continues, and you often see fire in the midst of it in the night-time.”*

It will be seen that both these accounts, written immediately after the birth of Monte Nuovo, agree in stating that the sea retired ; and one mentions that its bottom was upraised ; but they attribute the origin of the new hill exclusively to the jets of mud, showers of scoriæ, and large fragments of rock, cast out from a central orifice, for several days and nights. Baron Von Buch, however, in his excellent work on the Canary Islands, and volcanic phenomena in general, has declared his opinion that the cone and crater of Monte Nuovo were formed, not in the manner above described, but by the upheaval of solid beds of white tuff, which were previously horizontal, but which were pushed up in 1538, so as to dip away in all directions from the centre, with the same inclination as the sloping surface of the cone itself. “It is an error,” he says, “to imagine that this hill was formed by eruption, or by the ejection of pumice, scoriæ, and other incoherent matter ; for the solid beds of upraised tuff are visible all round the crater, and it is merely the superficial covering of the cone which is made up of ejected scoriæ.”†

In confirmation of this view, M. Dufrénoy has recently cited a passage from the works of Porzio, a celebrated physician of that period, to prove that in 1538 the ground where Monte Nuovo stands was pushed up in the form of a great bubble or blister, which on bursting, gave origin to the present deep crater. Porzio says, “that after two days and nights of violent earthquakes, the sea retired for nearly 200 yards ; so that the inhabitants could collect great numbers of fish on this part of the shore, and see some springs of fresh water which rose up there. At length, on the third day of the calends of October (September 29th), they saw a large tract of ground intervening between the foot of Monte Barbaro and part of the sea, near the Lake Avernus, rise, and suddenly assume the form of an incipient hill ; and at two o’clock at night, this heap of earth,

* Campi Phlegræi, p. 77.

† P. 347. Paris, 1836.